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Security Council

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Letter dated 16 July 2009 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith a report on the work of the Security Council during the presidency of the Russian Federation in May 2009 (see annex). The document was prepared under my responsibility, after consultation with the other members of the Security Council.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Vitaly **Churkin**

09-40750 (E) 210709

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Annex to the letter dated 16 July 2009 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of the Russian Federation (May 2009)

Introduction

Under the presidency of the Russian Federation, the Security Council engaged in an extensive programme of work during the month of May. The Council held 16 meetings and consultations of the whole. The Council adopted two resolutions, and agreed on six presidential statements and two statements to the press.

Africa

Peace and security in Africa

At its 6118th meeting, held on 5 May, the Council adopted a statement of its President (S/PRST/2009/11) expressing its deep concern over the resurgence of unconstitutional changes of government in a few African countries. It stressed the importance of expeditiously restoring constitutional order, including through open and transparent elections.

The situation in Chad, the Central African Republic and the subregion

On 8 May, the Council held its 6121st meeting at the request of the Permanent Mission of Chad to the United Nations (see S/2009/232) to discuss the situation in Chad, the Central African Republic and the subregion. The Officer-in-Charge of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Dmitry Titov, briefed the Council on the deteriorating security situation in eastern Chad resulting from new military incursions in eastern Chad of Chadian armed groups based outside Chad. He reported that military incursions in eastern Chad had prompted the United Nations to suspend all its activities in the Salamat and Guéra regions. The confrontation had seriously compromised the ability of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and their non-governmental organization partners to deliver humanitarian assistance.

He recalled that on 3 May, in Doha, the Governments of Chad and the Sudan had signed a new agreement to normalize relations and deny any support on their respective territories to rebel groups that are hostile to either of them.

He added that MINURCAT, which is tasked with protecting civilians in danger, facilitating the delivery of humanitarian aid and personnel, as well as safeguarding United Nations personnel and facilities, still lacks some of the troops and 14 of the 18 helicopters it requires.

The Permanent Representatives of Chad and the Sudan, A. Allam-mi and A. Abdalhaleem Mohamad, participated in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda.

On the same day the Council held consultations of the whole to discuss the item. Council members agreed on a statement of its President reflecting the positions expressed in consultations, which was adopted at the 6122nd meeting (S/PRST/2009/13).

Somalia

On 13 May, at a debate followed by informal consultations, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, B. Lynn Pascoe, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Alain Le Roy, and the Under-Secretary-General for Field Support, Susana Malcorra, introduced the report of the Secretary-General on Somalia pursuant to Security Council resolution 1863 (2009) (S/2009/210), and briefed the Council on the situation and support for peacekeeping efforts in Somalia. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia, Mohamed Abdullahi Omaar, made a statement.

The members of the Council endorsed the political process in Somalia, and efforts by President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed and the Transitional Federal Government to achieve peace and stability in the country. They expressed serious concern at continuing attempts by extremist forces, including Al-Shabaab fighters, to destabilize the situation in Mogadishu and other areas of Somalia. They also expressed continued support for the activities of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), which is receiving logistical support from the United Nations.

The members of the Council broadly agreed with the strategy presented in the report of the Secretary-General that improvement of the security situation and real progress in the political process are prerequisites for a decision of the Security Council on possible deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation in Somalia. There was unanimity in the Council with respect to the need to continue international coordinated efforts to combat piracy in accordance with the relevant Council resolutions.

On 15 May, in view of the rapid deterioration of the situation and renewal in fighting by opposition groups in Mogadishu, the Council held informal consultations, following which, at the 6125th meeting, the President of the Security Council made a statement (S/PRST/2009/15).

On 26 May, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1872 (2009), by which it extended the authorization for the African Union to maintain AMISOM until 31 January 2010, and requested the Secretary-General to continue to provide a logistical support package for AMISOM as described in his letter (S/2009/60), and to carry out the phased approach to possible deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation in Somalia subject to the conditions set out in his report (S/2009/210).

Côte d'Ivoire

At a public meeting on 29 May, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2009/16) in which it welcomed the endorsement by all the main Ivorian political actors of a new time frame for holding the presidential elections in Côte d'Ivoire on 29 November 2009, which will give a new impetus to the implementation of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement.

Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1533 (2004) concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

On 28 May in informal consultations the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1533 (2004) concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations, Ambassador Baki İlkin, briefed the Council on the discussion in the Committee of the midterm report of the Group of Experts pursuant to paragraph 8 of resolution 1857 (2008) and recommendations contained therein.

Security Council mission to Africa

On 28 May, the Council held its 6131st meeting to hear briefings by the members of the Security Council delegation on its recent eight-day mission to Africa, which included stops in Addis Ababa, where they met with senior African Union officials, as well as Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Liberia.

The Permanent Representative of Uganda, Ruhakana Rugunda, highlighted meetings with the African Union, which reviewed the situations in the Sudan and Somalia, as well as the financing of peacekeeping operations in Africa and the issue of unconstitutional changes of government on the continent. He said the talks had been useful in strengthening cooperation, particularly in the areas of conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, among other areas of mutual interest.

The Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, John Sawers, who jointly led the Ethiopia leg of the mission, said the two bodies were working together to address the well-known difficulties facing the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), as well as considering ways to strengthen action on the ground in support of AMISOM.

On the Rwanda leg of the mission, he emphasized that conflict had escalated in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, leading to cooperation between the Governments of Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo to address the shared problem of armed groups operating in the region, and said that the decision of the two countries had helped to reshape the regional political landscape.

The Permanent Representative of France, Jean-Maurice Ripert, briefed the Council on the activities of the mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. He said that, from all their meetings in the region, the mission had learned that the situation in the Great Lakes had improved, particularly as a result of the rapprochement between the Governments of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda. In addition, he noted that the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) remained indispensable. Stressing the need to urgently and comprehensively deal with the widespread problem of sexual violence, he noted that the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo had taken special measures to address such violence, including the enactment of a law against rape and other gender-based crimes.

The Permanent Representative of the United States, Susan Rice, said that the purpose of the visit to Liberia had been to reaffirm the Council's support for the Liberian people and Government, as well as for the United Nations Mission in Liberia. It had also been intended to examine such pressing issues as violence against women. She commented on the extreme fragility of peace in Liberia.

Asia and the Middle East

Middle East peace process

On 11 May, the Council conducted a ministerial-level meeting on the Middle East peace process chaired by the Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation, Serguei Lavrov. Speaking at this event the Secretary-General stressed the need to generate momentum in the Israeli-Palestinian talks, warning that the situation on the ground could easily worsen without fresh efforts by both sides as well as the international community. After the inconclusive results of the previous year's negotiations, said the Secretary-General, and the bloodshed in Gaza, the past three months had witnessed almost no progress on the two key resolutions — 1850 (2008) and 1860 (2009).

The Secretary-General also referred to the deep crisis of confidence among "ordinary people on the ground". He said that Palestinians continue to see unacceptable unilateral actions in East Jerusalem and the remainder of the West Bank, such as "house demolitions, intensified settlement activity, settler violence and oppressive movement restrictions due to permits, checkpoints and the barrier". He stressed that the time had come for Israel to fundamentally change its policies in this regard. However, he also emphasized that ordinary Israelis need reassurance that a future Palestinian State will guarantee their right to live in peace and security, and he stated that "indiscriminate rocket attacks that have caused loss of life, civilian suffering and damage to property in Israel are not only deeply unacceptable, but also totally counterproductive, and must cease".

He also stated that the challenge is to begin implementing the transformative changes on the ground, and to kick-start a renewed and irreversible drive to achieve an Israeli-Palestinian agreement, stressing that resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is fundamental to the well-being of both peoples, the region and the world.

In their interventions members of the Council confirmed their hope that the commitments made by the parties would be commitments kept and that the parties must pursue an irreversible effort towards the two-State solution, including by fully implementing commitments on the ground. Council members also voiced concern about the situation in and around Gaza, including continued arms smuggling into Gaza and continued Hamas rocket fire from Gaza into Israel, as well as Israeli settlement activities undermining the contiguity and viability of the Occupied Palestinian Territory and jeopardizing the two-State solution, and the need for Palestinian reconciliation.

At the end of its meeting, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2009/14), read out by the Foreign Minister, in which the Council stressed the urgency of reaching comprehensive peace in the Middle East. It stated that vigorous diplomatic action is needed to attain the goal set by the international community — lasting peace in the region, based on an enduring commitment to mutual recognition, freedom from violence, incitement and terror, and the two-State solution, building upon previous agreements and obligations.

The Council also voiced support for the proposal of the Russian Federation to convene, in consultation with the Quartet and the parties, an international conference on the Middle East peace process in Moscow in 2009.

Lebanon

On 7 May, the Council met to consider the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 1559 (2004). The Special Envoy, Terje Roed-Larsen, briefed the Council and noted that the domestic, political and security situation in Lebanon had improved markedly. He said that the general improvement of the situation in the country had created a favourable environment for strengthening sovereignty, political independence and Government control throughout the country.

The Special Envoy also stated that the parliamentary elections to be held on 7 June would constitute a milestone in Lebanon's transition since the adoption of resolution 1559 (2004). The parties, he insisted, must continue to adhere to the Doha agreement, including the commitment to refrain from using weapons to settle internal political disputes.

Reporting on further strides towards full implementation of resolution 1559 (2004), the Special Envoy said the Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon had nearly completed the process leading to full diplomatic relations between the two countries.

The Special Envoy informed the Council that Lebanese authorities had arrested a series of people on suspicion of spying for Israel. He added, that if those allegations proved to be true, they would constitute a violation of Lebanon's sovereignty. He also told the Council that there had been no tangible progress towards the disbanding and disarming of Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias, as called for by the Taif Accords and resolution 1559 (2004), and confirmed that this process should occur through an inclusive political dialogue that addressed the political interests of all Lebanese people.

The Special Envoy said that the United Nations had no means to independently verify the reports about illegal transfer of weapons across the Syrian border into Lebanon. He criticized Israel for continuing provocative overflights of the Lebanese territory.

Nepal

On 5 May, the Council, during its meeting on Nepal, heard a briefing by the Representative of the Secretary-General in Nepal, Karin Landgren, on the report of the Secretary-General on the request of Nepal for United Nations assistance in support of its peace process, and also on the recent developments in that country. Statements were made by the Council members and the representative of Nepal. At the end of the debate the President made a statement on behalf of the Council (S/PRST/2009/12), in which the Council expressed concern about the current political crisis in Nepal, and underscored the urgent need for the Government of Nepal and all political parties to continue to work together in the spirit of compromise.

Myanmar

On 22 May, during consultations of the whole under the item "Other matters" the members of the Council issued a statement to the press, in which they expressed concern about the political impact of recent developments relating to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

Timor-Leste

On 27 May, the Council held a meeting in private with the troop-contributing countries to the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT). The Council and the troop-contributing countries heard a briefing by the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General to UNMIT, Takahisa Kawakami, on issues relating to the concept of operations and rules of engagement for the military liaison group and the police component of UNMIT. Members of the Council, the Deputy Special Representative and representatives of participating troop-contributing countries had an exchange of views.

Europe

Cyprus

On 22 May, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Cyprus and Head of Mission, Taye-Brook Zerihoun, gave a briefing to the Council, in consultations of the whole, on the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), on the basis of the latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2009/248). The Special Representative noted the Secretary-General's recommendation that, in the absence of a comprehensive settlement, when UNFICYP continued to play a vital and unique role on the island, both as a stabilizing factor on the ground and as a source of substantive and administrative support for the Secretary-General's good offices mission, the mandate of UNFICYP be extended for a further period, until 15 December 2009. The consultations of the whole were preceded by a private meeting of the Council with the countries contributing troops to UNFICYP.

On 29 May, the Council adopted resolution 1873 (2009), by which it extended the mandate of UNFICYP until 15 December 2009. The result of the Council's vote was 14 in favour (Austria, Burkina Faso, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, France, Japan, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mexico, Russian Federation, Uganda, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Viet Nam) and 1 against (Turkey). After the adoption the representative of Turkey spoke in explanation of vote.

Georgia

On 27 May, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Johan Verbeke, introduced to the members of the Security Council the report of the Secretary-General pursuant to Council resolutions 1808 (2008), 1839 (2008) and 1866 (2009) (S/2009/254).

During the consultations members of the Council reiterated the need to maintain the United Nations presence in the region and to elaborate a new meaningful mandate of the Mission. It was also emphasized that a revised and comprehensive security regime should constitute the core of any future United Nations presence, contributing to the maintenance of peace and stability in the region.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

On 28 May, during a public debate, the High Representative and European Union Special Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Valentin Inzko, briefed

the Council on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina on the basis of his first six-monthly report to the Secretary-General (S/2009/246) since assuming office on 26 March 2009. The Chairman of the Bosnia and Herzegovina Council of Ministers, Nikola Špirić, made a statement to the Council, which also heard from the European Union presidency and Serbia.

Thematic issues

Non-proliferation/Democratic People's Republic of Korea

On 13 May, the Council heard a briefing by the Permanent Representative of Turkey, Ambassador Baki İlkin, on the activities of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006) concerning the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

On 25 May, during consultations of the whole urgently convened upon a request by the delegation of Japan, the members of the Council voiced their strong opposition to and condemnation of the nuclear test conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on the same day in clear violation of resolution 1718 (2006). The members of the Council decided to start work immediately on a Council resolution on this matter in accordance with the Security Council's responsibilities under the Charter of the United Nations.

Briefings by Chairmen of subsidiary bodies of the Security Council

At a debate on 26 May, the Council heard briefings from three Chairmen of subsidiary bodies of the Council, updating it on their work since the last such briefing to the Council, on 12 November 2008. Ambassador Thomas Mayr-Harting of Austria briefed the Council in his capacity as Chairman of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999) concerning Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities; the Deputy Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations, Jean-Pierre Lacroix, briefed the Council in his capacity as Acting Chairman of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism; and Ambassador Jorge Urbina of Costa Rica briefed the Council in his capacity as Chairman of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004).

Ambassador Thomas Mayr-Harting also made a statement on behalf of all three Chairmen, briefing the Council on ongoing cooperation among the three Committees and their bodies of experts. He presented an updated comparative table, highlighting the respective mandates of the three Committees and their experts.

Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions

On 14 May, the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions held a meeting under the Japanese presidency. The members of the Working Group discussed issues relating to the improvement of the implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council of 19 July 2006 (S/2006/507) and practical documentation and procedural questions arising from the everyday work of the Security Council.